



CITY OF
HAYWARD
HEART OF THE BAY

AGENDA DATE
AGENDA ITEM

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December 14, 2004

MEMO

To: The Mayor, The Hayward City Council and The City Manager

From: Council Member Olden Henson

Proposal to Name Fire Station # 1 the Matt Jimenez Station House # 1

Mateo has dedicated over fifty plus years of combined service to the City of Hayward as a firefighter, a fire chief for 25 years and as a Council Member for over 20 years. As the president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Mateo implemented some international safety policies that remain in place today. It is overdue that we the City Council honor Mateo with this act of naming this facility in his honor and with a dedication ceremony befitting the honor.

Attached is a biographical sketch of Mateo's professional achievements.

OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER OLDEN HENSON

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Matt Jimenez
Brief Biographical Sketch

MATT
JIMENEZ

- ✓ **President, International Association of Fire Chief (World Fire Chief)**
with membership in 34 Countries throughout the world – 1971
- ✓ **President, Western Association of Fire Chiefs, 10 Western States – 1968**
- ✓ **California Fire Chiefs, representative to League of California Cities Board of Directors – 1966**
- ✓ **Fire Prevention Excellence Awards, during Matt Jimenez administration:**
 - National Fire Protection Association “Grand Award”**
 - U.S. Chamber of Commerce “Grand Award”**

Both of these “Grand Awards” were received after competing with all cities in the U.S. and Canada regardless of size of city.

- ✓ **During Matt’s administration, Fire Insurance Rates were drastically reduced, as the result of the improvements to the Fire Training Programs, Fire Prevention programs and improvements to our water system.**
- ✓ **Fire Chief, Matt Jimenez, “Community Service”**
 - Founder of the Boys and Girls Club – 1962**
 - “Matt Jimenez Center”**
 - Presently serves as Chairperson, Board of Directors**
- ✓ **Matt, received the following:**
 - Hayward Lions Club, Distinguished Service Award**
 - Jr. Chamber of Commerce, “Young Man of the Year”**
 - P.T.A. “Lifetime Member Award”**
 - Honorary Lifetime Award, Chamber of Commerce (Hayward)**

Charles Peterson Leona Ward
Managing Editor Associate Editor

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Editorials

Matt Jimenez hangs 'em up

SEVEN YEARS ago, a few days before his installation as president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Hayward Fire Chief Matt Jimenez told a Daily Review reporter, "I really love being fire chief, and can't imagine being anything else."

People in Hayward who have an awareness of their fire service — and thanks largely to the missionary zeal of Matt Jimenez they number in the thousands — have a similar problem. It isn't easy to imagine the Hayward Fire Department under any other fire chief. For 25 years, more than a generation, Jimenez has been the only fire chief the people in Hayward have known. Say "Matt Jimenez" and Hayward people think "fire chief." Say "fire chief" and they think of Jimenez.

But all things in this life that have a beginning also have an end, and today the career that Matt Jimenez has loved so much, so visibly, with so much enthusiasm comes to an end.

Officially, he's on the job through tomorrow. But the celebration that will bring 1,000 or so friends and associates to Centennial Hall tonight for his retirement dinner will be the climax to his 32 years in the department and a quarter century as its chief.

The Matt Jimenez story is one in which he takes intense and deserved pride. It is a reminder that this society and culture of ours really is an open one, where men and women with talent and energy can succeed, sometimes beyond their dreams, despite the most commonplace beginnings. Jimenez proved that — proved it to the people of Hayward among whom he'd grown up before World War II, shining shoes, selling papers, scrapping on street corners, playing ball for Hayward High and nourishing an ambition to convert his athletic prowess and his competitive instinct into a boxing career.

When the ardor for the prize ring cooled and the same energies became harnessed to a firefighting career, it took Jimenez only seven years to reach the top of the departmental ladder. It was a shorter ladder then, of course — a nine-man department when he joined it, grown to 14 when he became chief in 1952. Its ranks had swelled to more than 100 several years ago.

The memories that Matt Jimenez will take with him as he bows out tonight are as rich and varied as his own colorful personality. Among firefighters, he is literally known around the world. But the offices he held and the attention they brought were icing on the cake. It was his service to the people of Hayward that

The Sculpture at Station No. 1 was my idea. I found a 1970 photo and arranged for a sculpture from Sausalito at a cost of \$10,000. I approached the City Manager and City Council, and they responded with "a great idea!" However, we will agree to \$5,000 and you will have to come up with the other \$5,000.

I made a phone call to my friend, Jack Holland, Jr., and he was so impressed that he begged me not to call anyone else about this request. He said he would give us the \$5,000 if the sculpture would state that it is in memory of his mother.

The Bell at Station No. 1 was also my idea. I provided the language for the bell.